

Letter to Kenneth MacGowan, January 30, 1939

D January 30, 1939 Mr. Kenneth MacGowan, Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation,
Beverly Hills, California My dear Mr. MacGowan:

Your letter of January 21, addressed to Dr. Grosvenor, has been received in his absence
in Florida, but will be brought promptly to his attention on his return, about February 1.

Yours very truly, pc Secretary to Dr. Grosvenor

ask'd 1/30/39 copied for Biography (The Telephone — Miscellaneous) P Twentieth
Century-Fox Film Corporation STUDIOS BEVERLY HILLS, CALIFORNIA January 21,
1939 Show M B G noted My dear Doctor Grosvenor:

I want to thank you again for all your help and counsel. It is really a great satisfaction to
know that within certain human limits we are doing well enough with the story of Alexander
Graham Bell to please you and your family.

I must thank you too, for your thoughtfulness in sending me the book on Dickinson. As a
small return, here is a quotation from an undated issue of the Los Angeles Daily News. I
wonder who this Joshua Coppersmith was.

Working upon "Alexander Graham Bell," has been a great pleasure and satisfaction.
Knowing your wife, your son, and yourself, has added greatly to it.

Cordially yours, Kenneth MacGowan Kenneth MacGowan KMcG/ddg. Enc-1

From Los Angeles Daily News, of 193

Science has not had an easy path. Witness, for instance, this amazing tirade, as published
in a Boston newspaper 62 years ago:

Library of Congress

“A man about 46 years of age, giving the name of Joshua Coppersmith, has been arrested in New York for attempting to extort funds from superstitious people by exhibiting a device which he says will convey the human voice any distance over metallic wires so that it will be heard by the listener at the other end.

He calls the instrument a ‘telephone,’ which is obviously intended to imitate the word ‘telegraph’ and win the confidence of those who know of the success of the latter instrument without understanding the principles on which it is based. Well-informed people know that it is impossible to transmit the human voice over wires as may be done with dots and dashes and signals of the Morse code, and that, were it possible to do so, the thing would be of no practical value.

The authorities who apprehended this criminal are to be congratulated, and it is to be hoped that his punishment will be prompt and fitting, and that it may serve as an example to other conscienceless schemers who enrich themselves at the expense of their follow-creatures.”